

Talking Points for Legislative Chairs, January 2015

Details are in the January issue of the *Advocacy Communicator*.

- The State Legislature has started a new two-year session and the *Advocacy Communicator* lists some of the education hot topics that we're likely to see in 2015.
 - Governor Brown wants to keep a tight budget, but the legislators want to restore some of the social services, like early childhood education, that were cut in recent years.
 - The Governor also wants the state to get out of the business of funding school construction. That could end up in the courts or as a ballot proposition.
 - Lawmakers will have to start thinking about whether they want to extend the tax increases that were approved by the voters in Prop.30. Those increases prevented further budget cuts to education, starting in 2012.
 - Teacher tenure, dismissals and layoffs will continue to be a hot topic, with more legislation expected.
 - The new Smarter Balanced state tests will begin in earnest this spring and there is talk of eliminating the high school exit exam.
 - The state school board is working on a new version of California's Academic Performance Index (API). That should be done by October.
 - There is going to be another push to expand the state's pre-school program so that it serves all of the low income children in the state.
- In his inaugural address on January 5, Gov. Brown said that next year schools will be getting \$65.7 billion, about \$5 billion more than the current year and a 39 percent increase from four years ago.
- California school districts are upset because the legislature last year passed a bill that would cap the amount of money school districts can keep in reserve funds. This won't go into effect until the state starts putting money into its own education reserve fund, but the California School Boards Association is going to fight to get the law repealed this year.
- Ron Bennett is going to be the guest speaker at the Advocacy Roundtable on January 23. He is always so informative, and entertaining, too. Don't miss seeing him!
- Sacramento Safari is coming up March 16 and 17! Registration costs go up on January 23.
- Another opportunity to go to Sacramento is the California State PTA Legislative Conference on February 9 and 10. The last day to register for that is Feb. 5.

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